

Office of the Governor

Annapolis, Maryland

From the Desk of Alice Fringer

Governor,

Note date of this.
It came to me while
you were away.

Apparently got
mixed up with letters
being handled on
your talk to Negro leaders

Alice

Shan Blair

ARIS T. ALLEN, M.D.
DISTRICT 6-C
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY



COMMITTEES:
SCIENCE, EDUCATION & WELFARE
COMMITTEE ON THE
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS
GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON
HUMAN RELATIONS

HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

62 CATHEDRAL STREET
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

April 13, 1968

The Honorable Spiro T. Agnew
Office of the Governor
State House
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Governor Agnew;

In the light of your recent statement in reference to Negro leadership, I feel compelled to communicate my own feelings.

First, let me point out quite candidly that during the two years you have been in office considerable progress has been made in the field of Civil Rights. For example, we in the Negro community recognize the integration of your own staff. We recognize the stand you have taken on public accommodations and open housing, and we appreciate the appointment of Negroes to key government positions. I would like to further point out that I have supported your programs in the past even at times when it was personally politically unsound for me to do so; but I did this with the belief that what you were attempting to accomplish was in the best interest of the people of Maryland. However I can not condone some of your recent actions. I hope that these actions are sincere and not politically inspired.

Let me begin by saying that I believe your public pronouncement to the Negro leaders on Thursday was ill timed in view of existing tension. Such statements could prove to be highly inflammatory.

Secondly, the telegram I received earlier this week invited me to a meeting in the Governor's office. As it turned out this was not a meeting, but rather a press conference called by Governor Spiro T. Agnew for the specific purpose of publicly reprimanding and embarrassing the Negro leadership as a whole. My disagreement with you in this case is not so much with what you said, but with the manner in which you said it. I feel that, had you felt the need for a conference with the Negro leadership, it should have been done in private surrounded by an atmosphere of trust, harmony and complete cooperation. I would also like to emphasize that I

*Advice
ask Agnew to
respond have her
talk about the part
in page 2. It
was factual.*

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did not walk out of Thursday's meeting, but waited to give you an opportunity to express yourself completely and to explain exactly what you meant.

Thirdly, I feel your classification of the entire Negro leadership into one group and then accusing them as you did was unjust. As evidence of this injustice, I am enclosing several recent newspaper articles which clearly indicate my own position on Black Power and Black Power advocates. I am certain that there were other Negroes at the meeting who have taken a similar position. Therefore to accuse the entire Negro leadership renders us an undeserved insult. Do you have facts to support the statement that leadership, in fact, has done the things described in paragraph 5 of your press release? If you do have such facts, I would then be happy to join hands with you against the guilty persons. encl 4p

And finally, I would like to express my feelings regarding the closing of the dormitories at Bowie State College. Many of the students were released from the Detention Center in Annapolis near midnight. Upon reaching the college campus they found State Policemen guarding the dormitories. The majority of the students, instead of being admitted, were forced to take their belongings and leave the campus, in the rain, at a very late hour of the night. I would like to point out that well over 200 students were involved and at least 100 of them were female students between 16 and 21 years of age. To call this action inhuman and not befitting the Governor of Maryland is to put it mildly.

I have tried to express my attitude and feelings in reference to your recent actions. I would appreciate your consideration and reaction on these matters.

Sincerely,



Aris T. Allen, M.D.

ATA:as

encls: 1

Lt. Baker - ~~Walter~~ Bowacks - no one put out in rain as such -
if kids couldn't make arrangements - indiv. talked to Capt.
Earl Keith and if necessary allowed to stay in dorm overnight
done in couple cases. Also offered bus transp. to Laurel
or Annapolis - paid by PG Co. no one took up offer.

Only few problems at most + were
allowed to stay inside until parents/friends came

Mrs. Cora Rice of NAACP stood by to
provide PG homes but no one needed

One white male did not
ultimately, delaying tactics. Left after
with no physical contact. Obstinant not
impossible.

Any belongings not taken were
allowed to pick up things in AM + go - -

Del. Allen People To Avoid 'Violence, Rioting'

(The following is a message from Dr. Aris T. Allen, Annapolis physician and member of the House of Delegates representing District 6C, to the Negro community.)

"If black power is interpreted to mean the use of the political, financial, moral and ethical strength of a group for the betterment of that group as well as all people of the city, the county and the state, then I subscribe to it. But if black power is interpreted to mean the use of violence, the use of force, rioting, looting and lawlessness, then I am unalterably opposed to it and to any person who advocates this.

"I would urge the community not to resort to any type of violence, lawlessness or rioting. This is not the type of thing that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. would want.

"There are many, many things concerning our community and about our city about which I am

(Continued from Page 1)

not completely satisfied — the lack of housing, the lack of equal job opportunities, the lack of apprenticeships. But, on the other hand, I think of the progress that has been made in our community in terms of integration in our school system, local hospital and various civic activities and jobs that have been open in our local government. These things are good and I think we have made considerable progress."

Del. Allen Criticizes Governor

Del. Aris T. Allen, R-6C, one of the Negro leaders who attended a meeting called by Gov. Agnew yesterday, strongly criticized the chief executive today for partially blaming non-militant leaders for the rioting in Baltimore.

"I was at the meeting," he said, "and I was one of those who did not walk out because I felt nothing could be accomplished by walking out. My presence there did not condone what went on in the meetings."

Allen further stated that he felt the meeting "was a public hastisement, embarrassment and ridicule of the entire Negro leadership."

He said he felt that "all Negro leadership was classified together, indicated, tried and convicted by the governor without an opportunity to present its own case."

"Many of us have publicly made crystal clear our own

(Continued on Page 7, Col. 5)

Criticizes Governor

(Continued from Page 1)
positions in relation to black power and black power advocates.

"In my own case, just about three days ago The Evening Capital carried a statement which I made in reference to my own feelings about black power and many of those present at the meeting had done precisely the same thing. Yet they were accused and classified along with others of suspected dubious activity.

"I feel that had the governor wanted to discuss any matter with the leadership, he should have done it in the proper atmosphere and one of harmony."

He said he feels the governor has "hurt his own image as well as the image of the Republican Party" and that "for the moment he has certainly lost his support from the Negro leadership. I strongly resent the maneuver in which this was done and sincerely hope that the governor will see fit to give some explanation as to why this was done and state his own position."

Allen said this was the second of "two blunders" the governor has made within the last several days.

"The first was the sudden manner in which the students were evicted from the dormitories at Bowie State College."

He referred to the arrests of more than 200 students from the college for staging a sit-in at the State House and the prompt closing of the college.

About 100 of the students were girls ranging in age from 16 to 20 years old, he said, and many left the Anne Arundel County Detention Center around midnight after which they returned to the dormitories to find "they were not permitted to stay."

"They were forced to take their belongings and leave the dormitory after midnight in the rain to seek shelter elsewhere," Allen said. "I feel this was extremely inconsiderate on the part of the governor."

Light Of Truth Evaporates Clouds Of Rumor

By PAT GONZALES
Staff Writer

The sun smiled down on Annapolis today evaporating a fog of rumor-sparked anxiety which clouded the area through last night.

The business-as-usual attitude yesterday of the city and Anne Arundel was in sharp contrast with rioting, looting and general civil disobedience taking place in the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan areas. However, the nearby crises sent fingers of tension into this locale and unfounded reports of local looting, fire bombing, curfews and civil disorder piled up.

Topping the rumor list was a report that Black Power leader Stokely Carmichael was in the area. If one had believed all reports, the Negro militant was "everywhere" — from Arundel-on-the-Bay to the Spa Rd. home of Dr. J. Alexander Wiseman, Bowie State Teachers College professor and chairman of the Annapolis Urban Renewal Authority.

Asked about Carmichael's rumored presence at his home, Dr. Wiseman today said, "Why would he be at my house? Now I've heard the very last thing."

The "omnipresent" Carmichael was also reported

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"visiting" last night with Anne Arundel Del. Aris T. Allen. The 6C Republican flatly scotched that rumor today when he said, "I have absolutely nothing to discuss with Stokely Carmichael."

Civil Rights march against

June 10, 1968

Honorable Aris T. Allen
62 Cathedral Street
Annapolis, Maryland

JUN 13 1968

Dear Aris:

May I open this letter with a sincere apology for my delay in responding to your letter of April 13. Certainly, an explanation is due. As you know, mail commenting on my remarks of April 11 flooded this office; for the majority of letters, pro and con, a form answer was sufficient. Unfortunately, your letter was caught up in this mass processing and did not reach my desk until my return from Europe.

In response to your comments, may I begin by saying I fully recognize and appreciate your past cooperation with the Administration. I well remember that you were the only Delegate from Anne Arundel County who supported the 1967 fiscal reform legislation. Even more, I appreciate your friendship and the conscientious professional service you have rendered to this office as recently as two weeks ago when you came to care for the Princess Anne student. Needless to say your prompt arrival not only reassured a frightened girl but relieved an equally frightened Governor's staff.

With this in mind you know that your candid criticism was deeply felt. I cannot agree with you that my remarks were ill-timed or inflammatory ... I spoke the truth as I saw it and I doubt if the reception would have been any better had I waited until today or a month from today.

Perhaps now that almost two months have passed you do not feel as critical of the content. Speaking out against extremists and pointing out the imminent and ultimate dangers of a conciliatory attitude toward advocates of violence was quite unique then. Now, my position has been reinforced by the opinions of such men as former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, John Gardner and most recently, President Johnson.

While I cannot debate or defend every point within the context of this letter, I would like to point out that I made no attempt to classify those invited to the meeting in any category other than "articulate,

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responsible leadership." The particular accusation which you refer to as unjust was directed at "some" and was based upon the news article which I read at one point during the meeting.

Finally, I believe that nothing can be gained by prolonging discussion over these remarks. My record in civil rights reveals clearly where I stand and gives credence to the honest inspiration of my comments. I have indicated every willingness to resume the dialogue and to work with all people dedicated to building a better Maryland.

Turning to another subject, I have made inquiries on your allegations regarding Bowie State College and was provided with the following information by Colonel Lally and his staff.

Lieutenant Bohler of the Waterloo Barracks stated no student was forced out into the rain. The campus was closed as the students knew it would be when they persisted to use civil disobedience techniques overtly and covertly threatened to burn down the school.

Students returning from the Detention Center were allowed to remain indoors until their family or friends came for them. Those unable to make proper arrangements spoke individually with Captain Earl Reith of the State Police and where it was necessary were permitted to remain in their dormitory overnight. In addition, Prince George's County provided free bus transportation to Laurel and Annapolis but no student sought to use this service. Mrs. Cora Rice of the Prince George's NAACP was on campus fully prepared to provide temporary housing but again no student wished this aid.

Students were not pressured to take their belongings that evening and were permitted to return to their dormitories to pack their clothing and books the next day.

According to Colonel Lally's office only one student, a white male, used delaying tactics and required an ultimatum by police officials. The young man apparently had a place to go and left without physical contact with the troopers on duty.

May I assure you that every possible consideration was given the Bowie students. I deeply regretted closing the campus and my action resulted from my conviction that it was essential to the safety of all students. This was a classic example of the disruption caused by a minority extolling and exhorting lawlessness. Prompt and firm action by government officials put an end to disruption and prevented destruction. The issue was a question of means and methods, not the relative validity of the students' cause. Proof of this can be found in my full cooperation

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with the students at Maryland State College who relied upon lawful methods to dramatize their grievances.

Again, may I thank you for your political support in the past and the excellent medical attention you have provided this office. I hope that we shall continue to work together to assure full civil rights, civil opportunity and civil tranquility for all Maryland citizens.

Sincerely,

STA:CR:mgn